

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (currently amended) A method for entering messages into a database, the method comprising:
- receiving a message from a user by means of one of a plurality of allowable communication devices; and
  - entering the message into a designated account in the database; ~~and~~ by converting ~~and~~ storing the message in a uniform storage format specified for the designated account, wherein the uniform storage format is ~~independent of~~ different from a data format used by the communication device ~~and wherein the uniform storage format is one of a plurality of different uniform storage formats used in the database.~~
2. (currently amended) The method according to claim 1, wherein the allowable communication devices include:
- telephone;
  - mobile telephone;
  - computer;
  - PDA; and
  - pager, and wherein the allowable communication devices each send data in a format different from the uniform storage format.
3. (Original) The method according to claim 1, further comprising requesting personal identification information from the user, wherein the information is used to verify access rights to the database.
4. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein the message entered into the database is a voice message.
5. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein the message entered into the database is a text message.

6. (currently amended) The method according to claim 1, wherein the uniform storage format specified for the database designated account may be one of the following:

MP3;

wave file;

AU;

WMA; and

Real Audio.

7. (currently amended) A method for retrieving messages from a database, the method comprising:

receiving a message-retrieval request to retrieve a requested message from a user by means of one of a plurality of allowable communication devices;

retrieving the requested message from a designated account in the database, wherein the message is stored in a uniform storage format specified for the designated account, wherein the uniform storage format is one of a plurality of different uniform storage formats used in the database and messages for each designated account are only stored in the uniform storage format specified for such designated account;

converting the message ~~contents~~ from the uniform storage format to a data format compatible with the communication device; and

conveying the converted message ~~contents~~ to the user.

8. (Original) The method according to claim 7, wherein the allowable communication devices include:

telephone;

mobile telephone;

computer

PDA; and

pager.

9. (Original) The method according to claim 7, further comprising requesting personal identification information from the user, wherein the information is used to verify access rights to the database.

10. (Original) The method according to claim 7, wherein the message retrieved from the database is a voice message.

11. (Original) The method according to claim 7, wherein the message retrieved from the database is a text message.

12. (Original) The method according to claim 7, wherein the uniform storage format specified for the database account may be one of the following:

MP3;

wave file;

AU;

WMA; and

Real Audio.

13. (currently amended) A computer program product in a computer readable medium for use in a data processing system, for entering messages into a database, the computer program product comprising:

instructions for receiving a message from a user by means of one of a plurality of allowable communication devices; and

instructions for entering the message into a designated account in the database; and

~~instructions for~~ by converting and storing the message in a uniform storage format specified for the designated account, wherein the uniform storage format is ~~independent of different from~~ a data format used by the communication device and wherein the uniform storage format is one of a plurality of different uniform storage formats used in the database.

14. (currently amended) The computer program product according to claim 13, wherein the allowable communication devices include:

telephone;

mobile telephone;

computer;

PDA; and

pager, and wherein the allowable communication devices each send data in a format different from the uniform storage format.

15. (Original) The computer program product according to claim 13, further comprising instructions for requesting personal identification information from the user, wherein the information is used to verify access rights to the database.

16. (Original) The computer program product according to claim 13, wherein the message entered into the database is a voice message.

17. (Original) The computer program product according to claim 13, wherein the message entered into the database is a text message.

18. (Original) The computer program product according to claim 13, wherein the uniform storage format specified for the database account may be one of the following:

MP3;

wave file;

AU;

WMA; and

Real Audio.

19. (currently amended) A computer program product in a computer readable medium for use in a data processing system, for retrieving messages from a database, the computer program product comprising:

instructions for receiving a message-retrieval request to retrieve a requested message from a user by means of one of a plurality of allowable communication devices;

instructions for retrieving the requested message from a designated account in the database, wherein the message is stored in a uniform storage format specified for the designated account, wherein the uniform storage format is one of a plurality of different uniform storage formats used in the database and messages for each designated account are only stored in the uniform storage format specified for such designated account;

instructions for converting the message ~~contents~~ from the uniform storage format to a data format compatible with the communication device; and

instructions for conveying the converted message ~~contents~~ to the user.

20. (Original) The computer program product according to claim 19, wherein the allowable communication devices include:

21  
telephone;  
mobile telephone;  
computer  
PDA;  
pager; and  
palm computer

21. (Original) The computer program product according to claim 19, further comprising instructions for requesting personal identification information from the user, wherein the information is used to verify access rights to the database.

22. (Original) The computer program product according to claim 19, wherein the message retrieved from the database is a voice message.

23. (Original) The computer program product according to claim 19, wherein the message retrieved from the database is a text message.

24. (Original) The computer program product according to claim 19, wherein the uniform storage format specified for the database account may be one of the following:

MP3;  
wave file;  
AU;  
WMA; and  
Real Audio.

25. (currently amended) A system for entering messages into a database, the system comprising:

a receiver adapted to receive a message from a user by means of one of a plurality of allowable communication devices;

a filing component adapted to enter associate the message into with a designated account in the database; and

a storage component adapted to convert and store the message in a uniform storage format specified for the designated account, wherein the uniform storage format is independent of different from a data format used by the communication device and wherein the uniform storage format is one of a plurality of different uniform storage formats used in the database.

26. (currently amended) A system for retrieving messages from a database, the system comprising:

a receiver adapted to receive a message-retrieval request to retrieve a requested message from a user by means of one of a plurality of allowable communication devices;

a retrieving component adapted to retrieve the requested message from a designated account in the database, wherein the message is stored in a uniform storage format specified for the designated account, wherein the uniform storage format is one of a plurality of different uniform storage formats used in the database and messages for each designated account are only stored in the uniform storage format specified for such designated account;

a conversion component adapted to convert the message contents from the uniform storage format to a data format compatible with the communication device; and  
a conveyance component adapted to convey the converted message contents to the user.

27. (new) A method for storing and retrieving messages in a database, comprising the steps of:

receiving a message from a first communication device;  
converting the received message from a first data format to a uniform storage format different from the first data format;  
storing the converted message in the database;  
receiving a message retrieval request for the message from another communication device;  
retrieving the converted message from the database; and  
converting the converted message from the uniform storage format to another data format, wherein the another data format has a format that is compatible with the another communication device and different from both the first data format and the uniform storage format.

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